

Remarks

In the present RCE, claims 1-20 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections: 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US publication number 2002/0194000 (Bennett) in view of USPN 7,058,573 (Murveit).

These rejections are traversed.

The claims recite numerous recitations that are not taught or suggested in Bennett in view of Murveit. Some examples are provided below with respect to the independent claims.

Claim 1

As one example, independent claim 1 recites receiving a speech utterance from a user and then extracting characteristics about the user from content of the speech utterance. The extracted characteristics are used to classify the utterance into a category. By contrast, Bennett uses the context of speech, not content, to classify utterances.

Bennett analyzes the input stream (i.e., speech utterance) for context characteristics such as background noise, signal strength, or callerID (see paragraph [0015] in Bennett). Bennett repeatedly expresses the importance of using contextual information about the incoming stream as opposed to content information of the stream: "A more complex characteristic of the incoming stream is contextual information. Contextual information is that information related to the environment around the input stream..." (see paragraph [0018] in Bennett).

Bennett expressly teaches using contextual information to classify the incoming stream. Bennett does not teach or even suggest extracting characteristics about the user from content of the speech utterance. Murveit also does not teach or suggest receiving an incoming speech utterance and extracting characteristics about the user from content of the speech utterance.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable over Bennett in view of Murveit.

As another example, claim 1 recites selecting a single one of the ASR engines to recognize the speech utterance. By contrast, Bennett selects multiple recognizers and then determines which one of the recognizers provides the best estimation of accuracy (see paragraph [0022] in Bennett). The process described in Bennett requires a larger amount of processing power because each speech utterance is sent to multiple recognizers. By contrast, claim 1 recites that a single ASR engine is selected from plural ASR engines. The selected ASR is already determined to be the correct ASR since it corresponds to the category to which the utterance is classified. It is not necessary to send the utterance to multiple ASR engines since the preferred ASR engine is selected based on content of the characteristics extracted from the speech.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable over Bennett in view of Murveit.

Claim 8

As one example, claim 8 recites a means for extracting information from content of the input signal, the information including characteristics of both the utterance and the user. Bennett does not teach or suggest this element. As noted, Bennett uses the context of speech, not content, to classify utterances. Bennett analyzes the input stream (i.e., speech utterance) for context characteristics such as background noise, signal strength, or callerID (see paragraph [0015] in Bennett). Bennett does not suggest extracting information from content of the input speech as recited in claim 8. Murveit also does not teach or suggest receiving an incoming speech utterance and extracting information from content of the speech utterance.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 8 and its dependent claims are allowable over Bennett in view of Murveit.

As another example, claim 8 recites means for using the characteristics to select a best performing ASR engine from the different ASR engines. By contrast, Bennett selects multiple recognizers and then determines which one of the recognizers provides the best estimation of accuracy (see paragraph [0022] in Bennett). The process described in Bennett requires a larger amount of processing power because each speech utterance is

sent to multiple recognizers. By contrast, claim 8 recites that a single best ASR engine is selected from plural ASR engines.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 8 and its dependent claims are allowable over Bennett in view of Murveit.

Claim 14

As one example, claim 14 recites receiving a speech utterance from a user and then extracting characteristics about the speaker from content of the speech utterance. Bennett does not teach or suggest this element. As noted, Bennett uses the context of speech, not content, to classify utterances. Bennett analyzes the input stream (i.e., speech utterance) for context characteristics such as background noise, signal strength, or callerID (see paragraph [0015] in Bennett). Bennett does not suggest extracting characteristics about the speaker from content of the speech utterance as recited in claim 14. Murveit also does not teach or suggest characteristics about the speaker from content of the speech utterance.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 14 and its dependent claims are allowable over Bennett in view of Murveit.

As another example, claim 14 recites using the extracted characteristics to select “one of the ASR engines” that most accurately recognizes the speech utterance. By contrast, Bennett selects multiple recognizers and then determines which one of the recognizers provides the best estimation of accuracy (see paragraph [0022] in Bennett). The process described in Bennett requires a larger amount of processing power because each speech utterance is sent to multiple recognizers. By contrast, claim 14 recites that a single ASR engine that will most accurately recognize the speech is selected from plural ASR engines.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 14 and its dependent claims are allowable over Bennett in view of Murveit.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Any inquiry regarding this Amendment and Response should be directed to Philip S. Lyren at Telephone No. 832-236-5529. In addition, all correspondence should continue to be directed to the following address:

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